

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

OFFICE OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION NEWSLETTER

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National Resource Inventory data released

The recently released report presents summary results from the 2007 National Resources Inventory (NRI). The 2007 NRI is the latest in a series of natural resource inventories conducted by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

It provides updated information on the status, condition, and trends of land, soil, water, and related resources on the Nation's non-Federal lands. Non-Federal lands include privately owned lands, tribal and trust lands, and lands controlled by State and local governments. The 2007 NRI provides nationally consistent data for the 25-year period 1982–2007.

According to the NRI, about 7.5 million U.S. acres were developed between 2002 and 2007. More than half of the land lost is “agricultural land” (cropland, CRP land, pastureland and rangeland)—land that is readily available for agricultural production. And roughly 30 percent of the land lost contained prime farmland—land best suited to produce food and other agricultural crops with the fewest inputs and the least amount of soil erosion.

To view the entire report, go to: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/nri/>

KEY FINDINGS

2002 to 2007 (US)

7,491,300 acres of land converted to developed land
4,080,300 acres of agricultural land lost
2,288,100 acre decrease in prime farmland

1982 to 2007 (US)

41,324,800 acres of land converted to developed land
23,163,500 acres of agricultural land lost
13,773,400 acre decrease in prime farmland

Washington statistics over the last 25 years continue to confirm a declining agricultural land base.

- Washington covers just over 42.4 million acres of land. About 71% of this area is non-Federal rural and developed land.
- Developed land in Washington increased roughly 5% from 2002 – roughly 100,000 acres.
- Non-Federal rural lands in Washington are predominantly, forest land (12.5 million acres), cropland (6.45 million acres), and rangeland (5.9 million acres).
- Cropland acreage declined from 7.75 million acres in 1982 to 6.45 million acres in 2007. Of that, cultivated irrigated cropland has declined from 1.29 million acres in 1982 to 1.05 million acres in 2007.
- Non-irrigated cultivated cropland declined 1.38 million acres between 1982 (5,655 acres) and 2007 (4,273 acres).
- About 869,000 thousand-acres of land were newly developed between 1982 and 2007, bringing the total to about 2.4 million-acres; that represents a 35 percent increase. This means that more than one-third of all land that has ever been developed in Washington was developed during the last quarter century.
- About 8 percent (or 2.2 million acres) of the non-Federal rural land base is classified as prime farmland. This represents a 167,000 thousand-acre loss since 1982.

You can send comments, questions, or requests for additional data summaries to the NRI Help Desk (nri@wdc.usda.gov). If you need help accessing or interpreting the data related to changes in land cover/use, please contact the Office of Farmland Preservation at jgiuntoli@scc.wa.gov or 360-407-7474

Stay in contact and sign up for the OFP-News Listserv!
Send an e-mail addressed to jgiuntoli@scc.wa.gov with the subject title “add to Listserv”

Email frequency is around one a month

Free one-day facilitator training workshop in Walla Walla



The Collaborative Leadership Program of the William A. Grant Water and Environmental Center at Walla Walla Community College is pleased to sponsor a **FREE one-day workshop on June 2** designed to help individuals develop and hone skills as an effective facilitator of group meetings and collaborative dialogue. If you find that your job, or interests, involve responsibility to lead and manage meetings or requires you to work with multiple interest groups in collaborative settings you will find this introduction to the basic skills and challenges of serving in a facilitation role to be highly informative, fun and beneficial. **To register, call 509-524-5206**

WSU Sponsored Effective Grant Writing Workshop

Washington State University's Division of Governmental Studies and Services, in partnership with the WSU Office of Grant and Research Development, is sponsoring a one-day workshop on **Effective Grant Writing**. The workshop will be held in Olympia on August 11, and will provide insight and skills for crafting competitive grant applications. Cost is \$89, with lunch included.

For more information, see the DGSS website: www.dgss.wsu.edu or the flyer at: <http://www.dgss.wsu.edu/Events/Grantwriting.pdf>



World Class. Face to Face.

NRCS Conservation Innovation Grants Available

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) recently announced the availability of state-level Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) for 2010, to foster innovative natural resource conservation approaches and investments related to agricultural production in Washington.

The deadline to apply is June 30, 2010.

Through its Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the NRCS may pay the cost of competitive grants up to \$150,000 during fiscal year 2010 for the state of Washington. Eligible entities and individuals are limited to grants of \$50,000 each.

Applications must be received in the NRCS Washington State Office by 4 P.M., Pacific Daylight Time (PDT) on June 30, 2010 to be eligible for consideration. The application announcement is available at www.grants.gov, the official posting site for all US Government grant opportunities, by searching under the Funding Opportunity Number USDA-NRCS-WA-10-02.

For information about the CIG grants program, applicants are urged to visit www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov or www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/.

King County Farmers Market Report

In February of this year, the King County Agricultural Program released their Farmers Market Report as requested by the King County Council. The report identifies many of the challenges facing farmers markets that impact their financial viability and future success and identifies some of the solutions that would help strengthen their operations and facilitate farmer access to the markets.

The report notes the important economic development role farmers markets play as incubators for small businesses, a catalyst for strengthening neighborhood business districts and helping bring more money into the state's rural communities. In addition, the report recognizes the important role markets have in the economic success of family farms.

To view the report, go to: [Full Farmers Market Report](#) (781 Kb)

For more information, go to: [Farmers Market Report Homepage](#)

Snohomish County Growers Alliance Announced

Join Snohomish County at **Swans Trail Farms on Tuesday, June 8, at 10:00 am** as Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon and local farmers introduce the creation of a new nonprofit organization devoted to advancing economic growth among county farmers.

The new nonprofit is a direct result of Reardon's agriculture initiative launched in 2007 and the Snohomish County Agriculture Economic Development Action Plan's Marketing committee and is a key aspect of the recently released "Snohomish County Growers Alliance Charter Business Plan," which was prepared by Community Attributes with a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The business plan, put together with guidance from a dozen local farmers over the course of the past year, highlights the need for an independent nonprofit structure promoted by local farmers but with assistance from county and municipal governments.

"This is an opportunity for local farmers to take ownership of their financial future," Reardon said. "This nonprofit organization will be owned and operated by farmers who want to increase their opportunities locally and regionally."

Led by local farmers, the nonprofit growers' alliance will assist in the development of a permanent and year-round farmers' market, find additional ways to increase farm productivity and profitability, and provide a voice for the agriculture industry within Snohomish County.

Swans Trail Farm,

7301 Rivershore Rd, Snohomish, WA 98290

RSVP to snocogrowersalliance@gmail.com

**Questions: Linda Neunzig (425) 388-7170,
Carol Krause (425) 334-4124**



Public-private partnership saves 100-acre farm



Three new organic farms are operating in the Orting area thanks to a successful public-private partnership.

Officials representing Pierce County, PCC Farmland Trust and the State of Washington gathered May 21 on the site of the former dairy farm to celebrate the completion of what's known as the Orting Valley Farms project.

The partners arranged to buy the development rights to the 100-acre property, reducing its value so that other local farmers could afford to buy it. Under the agreement, the land must be operated as organic farms in perpetuity.

"This project represents major achievements for Pierce County," Executive Pat McCarthy said during the celebration. "It saves our farmland, which encourages local food production. It establishes a new generation of farmers in the county. And it demonstrates a new model of farming: smaller, diversified, organic and operating with direct sales."

The May 21 celebration, attended by some three dozen people, hailed the operators of the three new farming ventures:

[Tahoma Farms](#), [Little Eorthe Farm](#), [Crying Rock Farms](#).

All of the stakeholders thanked retired dairy farmer Emma Ford for her patience during the conservation easement process, and for her determination to preserve the property that her family farmed for some 45 years.

Photos from the May 21 celebration are available here:

http://www.piercecountywa.org/cfapps/internet/news.cfm?node_id=102391

Regional Transfer of Development Rights Workshops

The Washington State Department of Commerce and the Puget Sound Regional Council invite you to a workshop to learn about how Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) can benefit your city.

Cities in Snohomish, King, Kitsap, and Pierce Counties are invited to a workshop to learn more about the benefits of TDR, how they might participate in the regional alliance to conserve priority lands through TDR, and the resources available for participation.

[The flyer here](#) shows the dates, location, and agenda for a workshop in your county.

At the workshop you will learn about:

- Grants to cities for TDR planning and infrastructure in receiving areas;
- Technical assistance materials;
- Direct technical assistance to develop TDR policies and regulations; and
- Outreach materials for landowners and developers.

For more information, contact:

Heather Ballash, Department of Commerce, heather.ballash@commerce.wa.gov, (360) 725-3044.

Ivan Miller, Puget Sound Regional Council, imiller@psrc.org, (206) 464-7549.



USDA Releases Local Food Systems Report



USDA Economic Research Service (ERR) has just released a new report entitled: ["Local Food Systems: Concepts, Impacts and Issues"](#) (PDF/1.5MB). This comprehensive overview of local food systems explores alternative definitions of local food, estimates market size and reach, describes the characteristics of local consumers and producers, and examines early indications of the economic and health impacts of local food systems.

For more information, go to: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR97/>

Complimentary Webcast for All Estate Planning Attorneys



Succession Planning for Farmers, Ranchers & Vintners Why It's Critical to Our Food Supply

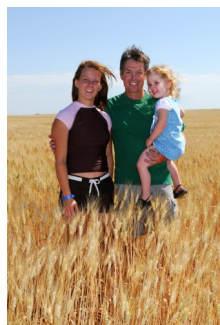
[24/7 On-Demand Access](#)

If you missed the opportunity to join Wealth Counsel for this live event on April 28, 2010, you can still gain valuable knowledge by accessing the recording. Take advantage of this opportunity to expand your technical knowledge. Learn about the unique aspects of succession planning for this special group of business owners and broaden your client base

What's the Take Away?

- Understand the impact of the estate tax repeal on farmers, ranchers and vintners.
- Learn how to make gifts of interests in family businesses qualify for the annual exclusion in light of Price v. Commissioner.
- Discover techniques for not treating the children equally, including discussion of equity versus control.
- Understand the counseling issues unique to farmers, including the "love of the land."
- Walk away with a list of resources for clients and attorneys to assist in the planning process.

USDA to offer Farm Transition Program



Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan announced the [Transition Incentives Program \(TIP\)](#) - a new program under the Conservation Title of the 2008 Farm Bill - to encourage retired or retiring owners or operators to transition their land to beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers. Producers who want to apply for the TIP can start signing up on Monday, May 17, 2010. If all program requirements are met, TIP provides annual rental payments to the retiring farmer for up to two additional years after the date of the expiration of the Conservation Reserve Program contract, provided the transition is not to a family member.

For more information on the program, visit USDA's TIP site - [Transition Incentives Program \(TIP\)](#)

WA State Grain Train stays on track



The Washington Grain Train currently is serving over 2,500 cooperative members and farmers in one of the most productive grain-growing regions in the world by carrying thousands of tons of grain to deepwater ports along the Columbia River and Puget Sound for transport to ships bound for Pacific Rim markets. This effort is managed by WSDOT, the Port of Walla Walla, the Port of Moses Lake, and the Port of Whitman County.

The Washington State Grain Train began operations in 1994 and currently has 89 grain cars in the fleet owned by the state and the Port of Walla Walla. The Union Pacific Railroad, BNSF Railway Company, and Washington short line railroads operate the

cars and carry the grain to market.

The Washington Grain Train collects wheat and barley from grain elevators in eight cities in eastern Washington. These include: Warden, Schrag, La Crosse, Prescott, Endicott, Willada, St. John, and Thornton. The grain is transported to export facilities in Kalama, Tacoma, Seattle, Vancouver, WA, and Portland, OR.

Use of the grain cars remains strong. Since its beginning, the Grain Train program has carried over 9,000 carloads totaling more than 900,000 tons of grain from Washington to national and international markets.

2010 Ag Recycling Schedule for East/West Washington



Northwest Ag Plastics, Inc. is contracted to operate the recycling program in Washington. Northwest Ag Plastics, Inc. is contracted to collect and granulate plastic pesticide containers for the agricultural industry in Washington, Idaho, and Oregon.

Recyclable plastic can include plastic containers that held pesticides, micro-nutrients, adjuvants and cleaners. Dedicated to environmental stewardship for all pesticide users, we also recycle plastic containers generated from other industries such as golf courses and lawn and tree care companies.

Container recycling is provided at no charge.

Service has expanded by collecting or granulating containers at-your-site to better accommodate those who wanted to recycle. In addition, the schedule of public collections has been expanded for those who can bring their containers to a central location.

For more information, please call NW Ag Plastics at 509-457-3850.

To view the 2010 recycling schedules for East/West Washington, go to: <http://www.nwagplastics.com/schedule.php>

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Local Beef Made Easier in Snohomish County

Link up with Snohomish County beef producers through this web site designed to facilitate the connection between producer and consumer. This is a project developed by the Snohomish County Cattlemen's Association. <http://gotbeef.org/>

Satellite images capture May 3 dust storm

A dust storm blew across central Washington state on May 3, 2010. The MODIS on the Aqua satellite captured this image during its afternoon overpass. To view the high resolution image, go to:

<http://waweatherscience.com/recent-news/eastern-washington-dustorm-on-may-3-2010/>

Succession Planning - How to know when it's time?

Interested in reading up on some question and answers related to when it is time to start planning? Visit Kevin Spafford's Legacy Project Q/A page for some great information.

http://www.agweb.com/LegacyProject/get_article.aspx?src=fsfp&pageid=155192

Dept. of Commerce GMA Biennial Update

Commerce has started its first set of biennial amendments to the administrative rules guiding implementation of the Growth Management Act. The process primarily addresses legislative changes to the GMA in the 2009 and 2010 legislative sessions. The process will also address four issues raised in a request for rule amendments the department received on March 29 and will include one section, affordable housing incentives, deferred from the 2009 update.

Commerce is now taking comments on a preliminary draft prior to developing a proposed rule. To see the project web site, go to www.commerce.wa.gov/wacupdate. Commerce is taking comments on the preliminary draft until June 18, 2010. Comments can be e-mailed to wacupdate@commerce.wa.gov. Questions, call Dave Andersen at (360) 725-3052

Office of Farmland Preservation

360.407.7474
Fax: 360.407.6215

VISIT US ONLINE!

<http://ofp.scc.wa.gov>



Farmland Preservation Task Force

Farmer Representatives

Jacob Anderson, South Central
Sheryl Cox, South East
Jeff Emtman, North East
Bob Hart, Chair, North West
Greg Schoenbachler, South West
Richard Thomason, North Central

County Commissioners

Don Munks, Western Washington
Rudy Plager, Eastern Washington

WA Association of Conservation Districts

Fred Colvin

Legislators

Senator Mary Margaret Haugen
Senator Jim Honeyford
Representative Joel Kretz
Representative Larry Springer

Non-Voting Members

Roylene Rides at the Door, USDA NRCS
Dee Caputo, CTED

State Agencies/Offices

Lynn Bahrych, Chair, Conservation Commission
Lee Faulconer, WA State Dept. of Ag.
John Mankowski, Governors Executive Policy

"OUR MISSION IS TO PROMOTE THE VITALITY OF FARMING, FARMERS, AND RANCHERS BY ENSURING THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL LANDS IN WASHINGTON STATE. WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS THROUGH POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNOR, THE LEGISLATURE, THE OFFICE OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND OTHERS AND BY ENLISTING PUBLIC SUPPORT. PROGRAMS WILL BE VOLUNTARY, RECOGNIZE LOCAL PRIORITIES, AND PROVIDE FOR ECONOMIC INCENTIVES."